1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

ble, and these men maintained Bornu at an apogee of greatness until well into the seventeenth century. One of these rulers, Idris Alooma, had a court scribe at the beginning of the seventeenth century, who wrote a number of accounts of his royal master's military expeditions. Luckily these have survived to give us a picture of Bornu warfare and government in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It was during this period, too, that Bornu was first mentioned on European maps, and from this time forward its fame became part of the legends of unknown kingdoms that lay inside the unexplored interior of Africa.

Bornu traditions claim that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed a decline in the power of the state. This is explained by the claim that the monarchy was becoming weak and overburdened with pomp, rituals, and religious study by the monarch. The ruling Mai appeared in public in a *fanadir*, or cage, which only his most trusted servants could approach and rarely led military expeditions himself. Much of this may be a reinterpretation of Bornu history by the second dynasty and their followers, who would naturally have played up the failures of the previous regime, when they took over in the nineteenth century. Contrarily there are traditions of many successful military campaigns during this period and Bornu's reputation as a great kingdom was still very widespread. Thus a wandering Englishman, Richard Tulley, who visited Tripoli at the end of the eighteenth century, spoke glowingly of what he had heard of Bornu's power. Parenthetically, he claimed that one of the Kanuri noblewomen living in Tripoli could speak the Italian language fluently.[6] On the other side of the case, Tuareg and Tubu raiders attacked the northern boundaries of Bornu and harassed the caravans with greater intensity than before.

The activities of these raiders are said to have increased during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it is important to realize that the entire southern Sahara was a hotbed of unrest during this two hundred year period. In the 1590s the armies of El Mansur of Morocco finally managed to cross the Sahara and destroy the great empire of Songhai. Its cities of Timbuctu and Gau never again became the great emporia of trade, politics, and learning they had once been. The Moroccans could not establish, so far from home, any stable administrative organization capable of replacing the one they had destroyed. This suddenly released vassal groups in the Sahara, many of whom bordered on Bornu, and these were now free to raid, stimulate revolts, and pillage caravans, while their cousins to the west fought over the remains of the Songhai empire and the control of western trade routes across the Sahara. It was during this same period of unrest that, all across the Sudan, wandering holy men, especially nomadic Fulani of Futa Djallon in Guinea, in Masina in the Upper Niger, and even in present day Nigeria, were expressing this disorder in religious terms. They preached through their leaders for a return to a truer and purer form of Islam. Often they claimed that those round them were pagans and had to be subdued in a holy war to reestablish Muslim order and law. It is in the light of all this turbulence that the so-called decline of Bornu in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries should be seen. Elsewhere empires were tottered or being formed, as in Futa Djallon; but Bornu remained, shaken perhaps by the general unrest of the period but still it survived, controlled its trade routes,

[6] R. Tulley, *Letters Written During a Ten Years' Residence at the Court of Tripoli*, Vol. II, (London: 1819), p. 51.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

175 642 came to Bornu—and who also came to be called Kanuri about this time—were the Sefuwa, their fellow Magumi clansmen and loyal followers, clients and slaves. The traditions declare that the leader who finally founded the new capital of Birni Ngazargamo curbed the power of his own nobles and insisted that all of them (except one who protected the western boundaries) should live in the capital, leaving subordinates to administer their fief-holdings.[1] It should also be remembered that 175 this newly formed Bornu kingdom (*ca.* 1450–1550 A.D.) tried to regain control over 642 Kanem and many of its other lost vassal territories in the Chad Basin and the 648 southern desert. Thus they very quickly attacked and defeated Bilma 400 miles to the north of Lake Chad which was the center for the Saharan salt trade. They also had to defend the kingdom against raiding desert Tuareg and the rising power of Songhai in the west.

Kanem was a state organized around a confederacy of clans, with one clan and its leading lineage having a senior status. The migration of this leading group into Bornu helps to explain why the Bornu kingdom was more centralized than its 175 predecessor as a political system. In Bornu the Magumi Sefuwa had no other re- 64 lated clan or clan leaders to share power with; instead they were confronted by a group of pagan peoples spoken of under the general term of "So" in the traditions. Against these people they fought battles of conquest to establish their rule in the area and in the end absorbed many of them into a group known today as the Kanuri. It would have been much simpler to unify this one group under a leader who 175 had no rival clan or clan leaders to cope with. Thus the new situation in Bornu 642 afforded both a stimulus and an opportunity for increased centralization of power in the political organization of the Kanuri state. It is against this growing centralization in the hands of the ruling monarch of Bornu that the following account of its structure should be gauged, for it is not always easy to portray change and development while describing how a society is organized.

Pre-nineteenth Century Bornu

175 643 At the head of the early Bornu state was the Mai or king. This office was hereditary in the male line, and all men whose fathers had been monarchs were eli- 1846 gible for the succession. The Council of Nobles, and accounts vary as to who these were, chose the new monarch upon the death of the reigning one, although powerful rulers could obviously affect the choice. The royal office carried with it an aura of untouchability, remoteness, and sacredness. People referred to the Mai as "Master" using the term applied by slaves to their owners. People approached the royal cage in which the Mai was seated and prostrated themselves before the bars putting sand on their heads or going through the motions of doing so to indicate the humility and respect they felt in his presence.

175 644 Members of the royal family held titled offices. These included the monarch's own mother, his senior wife, and often a senior female relative, either a sister, half-sister, or more distant female relatives in the male line. The sons and

[1] A fief is a political unit within a state over which a superior has rights of tribute collection and political leadership (not necessarily exclusive rights) given to him by his or his ancestors' relationship to a monarch.

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

daughters of sovereigns were the princes and princesses of the realm. Princesses were often given in marriage by the king to create alliances between the throne and other states, or nobles, or as rewards to trusted followers. Often, one among the princes was designated Chiroma or heir apparent. However, there was no hard and fast rule that the Chiroma either had the title for life, or that having been graced by the title its holder automatically succeeded to the throne. Although there was no special term for royal granddaughter, a king's grandsons who might become princes, if their fathers obtained the throne, were referred to by a special term.

Attached to the royal household by bonds of strict loyalty and obedience were the king's followers, some of whom lived in the palace, while others lived nearby. These, known as Koguna, together with members of the royal family and their followers provided the basis for the nobility of the state. They were of two main types—slave and free—with slaves being divided into ordinary slaves and eunuchs. The slaves originated from the slave trade or from raids made among pagan groups, or from the sons and daughters of slaves. The free nobility came from deroyalized segments of the royal family as it expanded through time and from descendants of nobles. This nobility was the source of personnel for the bulk of the administrative activities of the state. They served as the monarch's personal bodyguard, as messengers, military commanders, tax collectors, trusted spies, praise singers, slave raiders, consuls, and foreign emissaries. From their ranks came the people who bore the major titles of the state. Some of the titles were derived from Islam; others came from earlier times in Kanem or Bornu history. Although much changed in their nature, a number of these have survived to the present day.

In order to administer the kingdom, titled nobles, including the titled women of the royal family, were given fiefs equivalent to what are today village area units. All such holdings were fragmented and dispersed so that no one noble had control over any large portion of the state. The fief holdings varied in size and number per noble and were a measure of the political success of that particular noble at any point in time. The one exception was the Galidima. The holder of this title maintained a large consolidated set of village areas on the western boundary to protect the east-west trade and guard the western approaches to the capital city. The fief-holders raised militia for the monarch and taxes for themselves and the monarch. They also served as an appeal court system for the local people when they wished adjudication at higher than the local level. Thus people could obtain a royal audience by going through the fief hierarchy. The Kanuri also used the widespread Sudanese practice of dividing the kingdom into quadrants based on the four cardinal directions. Over each quadrant was a highly trusted follower of the king who could oversee the administration of his own quadrant, raise direct royal tax levies, and serve as an alternative form of hierarchy between the people and their ruler. The system functioned in this way as a check on the power of fief-holders, since the king could take fiefs away and redistribute them if there was sufficient reason for doing so. Through their own subordinates these quadrant leaders also administered the nomadic peoples of the kingdom who could not be easily worked into the administration of the fief system based as it was on settled populations. Two of the four leaders were always eunuchs, making for an automatically free power of appointment by the monarch, since these men had no heirs. The other two were always chosen from among the king's closest associates, although there was also a

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

ing arms. A wife or female slave often accompanied each man to cook for him. But local townspeople were also expected to supply the army with food when it passed through their territory. However, it was preferred that the army be self-sufficient even to the point of digging their own wells. Discipline obviously posed some problems since the records indicate that at times army morale was low, especially during long, arduous campaigns. However, it picked up very quickly when the prospect of booty was in evidence.

The Nineteenth Century Kingdom

From the beginning of the nineteenth century our records and understanding of Bornu society increased enormously mostly because of the availability of excellent first-hand accounts such as those by Denham and Clapperton in the 1820s, Barth in the 1850s, and Nachtigal in the 1880s. When put together with the oral traditions these accounts fill out a fairly complete picture of Bornu society during the last century.

In the early part of the century Bornu political life was complicated by a fiction. The ancient Sefuwa rulers were still holding court while the Kanembu Shehus were in strict control of the state. This meant that many of the ancient titles lost their meaning because their functions were taken over by members of the Shehu's following. For example, the title of Kaigama, associated traditionally with leadership of the army while on a campaign, was dropped. Instead the Shehu used the title of Kachella, which had previously meant a slave follower who bears arms. Under the Shehus, Kachellas became powerful leaders of armed regiments of their own followers, the size of each Kachella's force being an indicator of his power and rank. At the same time the idea of raising military levies from fiefs was not dropped. Nevertheless the structure had changed, for now the Shehus used Kachellas and their permanent armed following as the military core of the state. Much later in the century, after the collapse of the Sefuwa dynasty, the title of Kaigama or war leader reappeared and was applied to the most powerful of these Kachella. In other words, a number of the old titles of Bornu could not be used in the nineteenth century, since at its beginning these titles were still associated with the old dynasty and its ancient court.

Although titles were varied to some extent, and new ones connected to the names of loyal followers of the Shehu appeared during the double regency, the Shehus organized their governmental administration in somewhat the same manner as that of the earlier Bornu state. The idea of the four quadrants atrophied while the old quadrant leaders remained under the ancient dynasty; and, as in the case of the war leader, these titles were not utilized until the old dynasty had been done away with. They were then absorbed into the general hierarchy of titles of those closely associated with the Shehu. However, the general idea of administering through quadrants was never used again. The Shehu's court met every day to discuss state matters and adjudicate cases when necessary. The Shehu sat on a raised dais and behind him in a semi-circle sat the male members of the royal family who were eligible for the throne. Sitting facing one another in two parallel lines in front of the group were nobles of the realm, slave and free, except for the Galidi-

ma, who when he was in court, sat in front of the throne facing the same way as the Shehu between the two lines. This symbolized his semi-independent status as a holder of a large section of the kingdom rather than a set of fragmented fiefs. Thus the idea of a consolidated set of fief-holdings on the western boundary was maintained. There was a constant threat from the Fulani which made such a move politically expedient.

How much actual power this nineteenth-century court actually had is debatable. Obviously a few favorite advisers who had the ear of the monarch could become very powerful men during the period of their favor. However, who these were seems to have varied throughout the century. Indeed even a place in court might be gained by a very ambitious rural chief, if he appeared often enough and was able to please the monarch by his service and tributes. In the realm of the judiciary some significant changes occurred as well. Before the nineteenth century, as we have already noted, there was a chief judge, the Talba, who was ranked as "the second man" in the state. During the double regency at the beginning of the century, the first Shehu, Laminu, acted as his own chief judge. He was steeped in Koranic learning and is supposed to have had magical powers that enabled him to adjudicate even the most difficult of cases, harshly but with justice. Parenthetically, this power—and not his military acumen and leadership—is considered by the traditions to have been the chief reason why Laminu saved Bornu from the Fulani wars. Later in his rule, sometime in the 1820s, Shehu Laminu appointed two leading religious personages who came from the families of the leading Bornu religious practitioners to the new offices of Liman and Imam. The former took over the major duties of chief legal adviser to the Shehu, while the Imam became the chief religious practitioner in the state. The old Talba stayed with the court of the former dynasty, and after its demise the title became a lesser one in the judicial hierarchy which is where it stands today.

Punishments for misdemeanors were relatively harsh by contempory standards. Adultery on a Muslim holy day could bring 400 lashes to a man or 200 to a woman. It was believed that judges in the capital of Kuka actually set spies upon the populace in search of law breakers. Intentional murder was punishable by death, and the relatives of the dead man carried out the execution by stoning the murderer. Thieves who were repeatedly caught finally had a hand cut off or were tortured by being buried up to the neck, then having their heads buttered or honeyed and exposed above the ground to attract insects. Unpaid debts proven in court resulted in the confiscation of all the debtor's movable property and a fine to the court. The debtor was pinned to the ground by court officials until he consented to confiscation. However, if he obviously had no means at all, the judge dismissed the case with the words, "God send you the means."

All titled officials and even untitled followers of the Shehu could be given or they could inherit, at the pleasure of the Shehu, rights of revenue collection and administration in one or more settlements spread throughout the entire state. These fiefs were granted by the Shehu, nominal owner of all the land in the state. Generally speaking such rights were hereditary in the male line, but the Shehu could diminish or expand the holding of one fief-holder at the expense of another, and a new monarch was expected to patronize his own favorites. Any person holding a fief directly from the monarch was called a chima kura or "the big lord." There

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

643 bodied in his title, "commander of the faithful," and is expressed ritually in a number of ways. Thus at the feast celebrating the end of Ramadan (the annual Muslim fast), a special ram of the Shehu is killed by the chief religious leader of the state. No one considering himself a citizen of the emirate and a subject of the Shehu is supposed to kill his own ram for the feast day until the royal ceremony is completed.

643 644 At all annual festivals and state occasions, and every Friday to a lesser extent, the Shehu is attended at his palace by his court and representatives of the people. The court includes members of the royal family, title holders, the Native Authority council members, and any district heads who may be in the capital or their city representatives who sit outside the royal courtroom. Into the royal presence come representatives of each Native Authority department, representatives of the religious leaders of the community, a sample of school children, leaders and representatives of the various occupational groupings under their own headmen. Each group gives symbolic pledges of loyalty and obedience to the throne by saying prayers for the health and welfare of the monarch and the state. The people, including the nobles, go down on their knees to the monarch, stand when he stands, remove their shoes in his presence, and speak to him only indirectly using terms of reverence and respect.

64 It is difficult to assess what real power the Shehu has in the emirate government. The present incumbent is a very old man, and for the last decade or so the bulk of administrative affairs have been handled by the Native Authority Council under the direction of the Waziri. Whether this now indicates a trend toward constitutional monarchy or whether a new, younger and more vigorous Shehu would reassert the power of the throne is a question that is fascinating but at present not capable of being answered. Certainly the Native Authority Council and the various departments under the council are new and growing powers in the contemporary society, but the district heads are formally responsible to the Shehu. Since the district heads are still very powerful members of the political system, a new Shehu could conceivably affect policy and the administration of the emirate very considerably through his influence on these men and their appointments. It is also very possible that he would influence the Native Authority Council itself and appointments to that body. Potentially the office is a very powerful one, and it seems unlikely that its power will diminish in future since the instruments of power are available to anyone occupying the throne who wishes to use them.

647 [631] [648] The main business of government of the emirate is handled on a day-to-day basis in the Native Authority departments, which are coordinated with similar departments in other emirates of the province under the Bornu Provincial Government which in its turn looks to the Regional Government of Northern Nigeria for policy directives that are regional in scope.

647 463 929 [565] [117] The personnel of the Native Authority departments form what has come to be called a new class in the society. They are salaried bureaucrats who work in offices and generally have some form of western education. They wear wrist watches, read English and vernacular newspapers, listen to the radio for both local, national, and international news, go to political meetings, join civil service associations, and think of themselves as urban even when they are stationed in the rural

El Kanemi brought
175 with him a group of Kanembu and Shuwa nobles, who formed the
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565 nucleus, along with their men, of the army which drove back
177 the Fulani invaders of Bornu. These noble Kanembu families remained in Bornu and adopted Kanuri culture. El Kanemi built the new capital of Bornu at Kukawa, and his son Shehu Omar
175 ruled from Kukawa. The empire of Bornu had declined greatly
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565 from its zenith in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and the Fulani attacks were both a sign of its weakness and an additional factor in furthering the decline. In form, however, the empire remained much the same. Many of the old families who had been aristocrats under the Mais retained
175 their titles, their lands and their position. The new noble
177
565 Kanembu and Shuwa families that had followed el Kanemi were given Kanuri titles and entered the social system as Kanuri aristocracy. In time, they accepted Kanuri culture, according to accepted procedures of assimilation which are well understood by the Kanuri and apply to conquerors and conquered alike, to slaves and to freemen.

175 The Shehu and his court ruled in Kukawa. Members of the
• 644
565 royal family were given large tracts of land, including many
631 villages, and from their lands they took money for taxes paid
423 to the central government and for their own uses. In like fash-
[651] ion, the nobility, who were the commanders of army regiments and holders of high titles, had their lands and villages. These were the chimas. Even religious leaders, such as the Imam, were
175 given land. The nobles who were chimas, continued to live in
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632 565 342 556 town is a square flat-roofed house built entirely of mud bricks, with an adobe veneer and turreted roof decoration.

361 Blocks of contiguous compounds, with their entrance-ways facing out onto the streets, make up clusters which are similar to a city block. [363] Streets are laid out on a grid pattern, [492] some narrow and others wide thoroughfares. There is little vehicular traffic, but there is a fair amount of traffic made up of camels and donkeys used as pack animals, and men on horses.

632 [563] Wards may have different characters, especially in large towns with non-Kanuri populations, where different ethnic groups will all cluster in one ward. Wards are also often sub-divided [463] into neighborhoods. These take their character from a particular type of craft localized in a neighborhood, or a single group of tradesmen dealing in the same commodity whose compounds are found located in one neighborhood.

632 361 Every Kanuri town is built around a central plaza called the dandal. The dandal is a cleared area running east to west, faced with compounds and various public buildings on its north and south sides. The western border is frequently open. At the eastern end, with the dandal stretching out before it, is the entranceway to the compound of the Lowan or Ajia, the focal point of a Kanuri town. The entranceway of the Lowan or Ajia's [614] compound always faces west, into the setting sun. The palace of the Shehu in Maiduguri (the Shehuri) fronts on the great dandal; at its far end is one of the gates of the city.

000 Two other foci of the Kanuri town are the market-place and

175 granting of titles by the Shehu (and before him by the Mais),
565 and the regular practice of slavery.
554

A title (kagala) which the Shehu bestowed on a man was both a recognition, and a source of his social position, for the title embodied power, wealth and prestige. Power lay in the political office which accompanied the title; wealth lay in the access to land, labor and taxes which followed from title and office; prestige lay in the recognition by all of the symbolic meaning of the title. Aristocracy and slaves were given titles, but talaka, commoners, never were granted titles in former times.

565 One set of titles is held by royalty. The title of Shehu
554 itself is conferred by a council (modules) according to strict
644 rules of succession, after a Shehu dies. Other titles belong
[643] to members of the Shehu's family. These are unlike most titles in that they are titles ascribed by virtue of royal kinship and are not conferred to the individual by the Shehu. They include:

Maina - a prince, the son of a Shehu; also brothers of the present Shehu whose father was himself Shehu.

Mairam- (also called Nana) - the daughter of a Shehu.

Maidugu - the grandchild of a Shehu.

Some royal titles are granted by the Shehu to royalty. These are:

Maira - mother of the Shehu. If the Shehu's own mother is dead, another woman is given the title Maira, and functions as the Shehu's 'mother'. The title can be given to someone not of the Shehu's own family, should he wish to do so.

554 Mogorom - younger sister of the Shehu. A conferred title
565 which can be given to anyone. If the Shehu does
644 not like his younger sister, he can give the title to whomever he wishes.

Dogoma - also the younger sister of the Shehu, but a lesser title than that of Mogorom.

Gumsu - usually head wife of the Shehu, but the title can instead be given, at the Shehu's pleasure, to another wife.

Kərjiroma - head of the Shehu's chirs.

175 Next let us turn to consider the Chimas, who had been men-
423 tioned earlier. Since all land was the Shehu's land, he had
601 the power to give or withdraw the fiefs which were granted to
565 chimas. By custom, certain lands were reserved for the Imam.
554 In addition, the Maira, Gumsu, and Mogorom also had their own
644 fiefs. The remaining lands were largely in the hands of the Shehu's kabuna, his knights and the commanders of his troops.

175 The Shehu's kabuna were divided into those who were free (kambe)
565 and those who were slave (kalya). A number of titles which the
554 Shehu granted were reserved for slaves. Among the slave titles,
567 some were titles of kabuna, and others were not. Both of these, kabuna slaves and non-kabuna slaves, could be chimas. The four most important chimas held the following titles: Kaigama (a slave, and the head of all slave kabuna), Mastrema (a slave, but not a kabuna), Yuroma (a slave, but not a kabuna), Yerima (a freeman and a kabuna).

175 The most important Kanuri titles, all those mentioned above,
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175 567 554 (in this case a titled free-born man and a titled slave of the Shehu's are identical). Let us first consider the case of a slave of the Shehu. Slaves of the Shehu fall into two general categories: kabuna and sugurumma. The kabuna are the knights and commanders of army units. The general of the army, and a slave kabuna, held the title of Kaigama, one of the highest Kanuri titles. The Kaigama was one of the four greatest chimas, ruling one of the largest fiefs. He had very many slaves of his own. Under the Kaigama were the Kazellas, high military officers who also were slaves. These were the slave Kabuna, 175 titled and themselves chimas. The sugurumma were an entirely 567 different category. They were personal slaves, in charge of 644 the household of the Shehu. It was a common practice in raiding 839 for slaves, to capture large numbers of young boys as slaves of [304] the Shehu. These were then castrated; penis and testicles were removed entirely. Of a group of fifty or so, aged five or six, who were subjected to castration, it was said that perhaps five or six might survive the operation. These eunuchs (adim, an Arabic term) served as personal servants of the Shehu and lived in his household. The sugurumma is literally the keeper of the key, an indication of his position of trust within the Shehu's 175 household. Several titles are reserved for adims. These are: 567 644 839 554

Yuroma - the most important of the adims, and one of the four greatest chimas. On his death his title goes to the adim presently holding the title of:

Mastrema - the second most important title held by an adim, and another of the four greatest chimas. He is succeeded by the holder of the title:

175 567 644 554 639

Shetima Abu Karim - whose title is below the other two, but who is personally closest to the Shehu. He is succeeded by the

Mala Aodi. All other adim are called abagana. Today, of course, the adim titles are vacant, the last important adim being Mastrema Musa who died in 1921. He is remembered as a fat man, with a high voice and an evil disposition. He was for a time the Ajia of Borsari district, but was dismissed. One adim, Abagana Modu Manga, still survived and lived in Maiduguri in 1956. Not all of the sugurumma were eunuchs. The title Digma is that of a slave sugurumma who was not a eunuch, and that title survives today, held by the present Ajia of Magumeri district.

175 567 554

Slaves of the Shehu fall therefore into two vertical categories, kabuna and sugurumma, and crowning each of these categories were titled slaves who were among the most powerful individuals in the land, and account for three of the four most important chimas. However, the bulk of the Shehu's slaves never rose to positions of great power; they served in a variety of lesser capacities, performing tasks of various degrees of importance in the administrative system and within the household of the Shehu.

Slaves of a noble, either a titled slave or a titled freeman, also fall into differing categories, which serve to determine their position. One class of slave is the susana, or house slave. He has been born in the household of his master, usually of a line of slaves who have always been slaves of one

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643 Bornu in the 1820's. (1)

In 1835 Shehu Laminu retired and his son Umar (1835-1880) took over the effective headship of the Bornu state. Like his father, he attempted to maintain and expand the kingdom, while keeping the old Mai on the throne. During one of Umar's western campaigns against Zinder, 175 669 721 the puppet Mai, Ibrahim appealed to Wadai for help in restoring him as the rightful ruler of Bornu against the Kanembu Shehu who had usurped the power. Umar returned from his Zinder campaign to find himself being attacked from the east by Wadai. Hearing of the Mai's instigation of this aggression, Umar put the puppet ruler in irons and tried to fight the Wadai forces at Logone, south of Lake Chad, but he was soundly defeated. Kuka was sacked, and the Wadai leader put Ali the young brother of the Mai on the throne. Umar, in high dudgeon, executed Ibrahim and bribed the Wadai forces to withdraw from Bornu. The young Ali and his small following were now attacked and defeated, during which encounter Ali lost his life. And [643] so ended the dynasty of the Magumi Sefuwa of Bornu. Shehu Umar declared himself the sole ruler of Bornu and rebuilt the city of Kuka which Barth 173 643 644 visited in the 1850's. Local tradition marks this occasion by telling how Shehu Umar was the first of the Bornu monarchs ever to sit on a chair. Before this time leaders had always sat on rugs. It is also related of him that he took a member of the royal family, Ali Mairami, who was the son of a daughter of Mai Dunama (1810-1818), (i.e. he was not in line for the succession) and made him a Maisuli or joking king, who could joke with and chastise the Shehu in a manner prohibited to anyone else. This practice is still carried on today by the descendant of Ali Mairami in the court of the Shehu at Maiduguri.

(1) Denham, Dr. Clapperton H. Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa, 1826.

175 In response to this constant warfare, villages in
361 danger would 29.
712 either build near hills, to which they would retire in case of attack, if they lived in the south, or hide the site in a bushy place with barricaded and camouflaged entrance paths to the town. They would often build large covered holes with spikes at the bottom to stop intruders, especially raiders on horseback. Again, many villages would construct large mud-stockaded walls for the same protective reason.

175 This pattern of constant warfare in Bornu is very old. The
721 contemporary record of the reign of Mai Idris Alooma, which has been pre-
178 served, is almost entirely an account of one military campaign after
175 another. Firearms have been used in Bornu for at least 400 years, and the
411 first request that Shehu Laminu made of the European explorers, who found
178 their way there in the 1820's, was for a cannon.(1) The interest in war-
175 fare by the leaders was reflected in the highly organized manner in which
726 warfare was conducted. Thus, before the battle witnessed by Denham, the
[701] Shehu inspected at military maneuvers of his troops. Each chief and slave commander (Kachella) had his own little "general staff" of close associates and when the order to advance on the enemy was given, each of these little "staffs" led their own groups forward. When the maneuvers were over, one of the groups was given the task for that day of watch and sentry duty for the entire camp.

173 Informants in Maiduguri recalled 24 Kachellas in pre-Rabeh
701 Bornu. Each had a "regiment" of cavalry and foot-soldiers, and the army was drawn into two divisions, under twelve Kachellas per unit. The first
[644] was called the "house" force. It generally remained close to the Shehu, and its soldiers constituted a standing army or palace guard whose primary duty was the protection of the monarchy. The second division was called the "bush" unit, not because it fought outside the capital, but rather be-

(1) Ibid., p. 149.

173 554 562 571 [644] guilds. (1) The Ma'aram or Shehu's sister, and the Maira, the King's mother were the head women of the state. There was also a Do'oma or head of zower (unmarried divorced women) for the entire state, as well as the Gumsu, the senior wife of the Shehu. Each town had its own local head of women and head of the unmarried divorced women under the [574] titled heads in the capital. When visitors or an army regiment arrived the total community of women could easily be organized under their leaders to prepare food and proper lodging for the strangers. The titled women in the capital were invested to their offices in male robes.

178 554 562 [644] The title Do'oma (head of zower) is said to have fallen into disuse after the fall of the first dynasty at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but was revived in 1925 by Shehu Sanda. It exists today but has no reference to zower. Informants around the palace claimed that except for the title of Maira (Queen Mother, but now held by any senior patri-female relative of the Shehu), the Gumsu (the Shehu's senior wife) chooses the women to receive the titles of Ma'aram and Do'oma.

554 562 527 Although it was not observed, informants claimed that at big celebrations of state, the titled women must wear their men's robes of office, men's hats, and walk with their special men's sticks. This ceremonial transvestism emphasizes the congruency of nobility, authority, and prestige with maleness.

554 562 [431] In contemporary Bornu, the word ma'aram has come to mean the local head of the unmarried women, who are not linked very closely into any overall state organization. It is customary for the women when they marry to give her a small payment, fataka (Kanuri for two shillings) which the men give to the Lawan (Village Area Head) before the marriage.

[476] The women are organized as a semi-formal work force under the ma'aram for quite traditional purposes.

(1) See below pp. 269-270.

634 The District organization is roughly similar throughout the twenty-one such divisions in Borno Emirate. Each District shares the [368] name of its chief town. This town serves as the District capital and houses the DH and his followers, the District representatives of the N.A., a District court house for the Alkali (District judge), and a [491] Junior Primary School. Today most District capitals are connected to the Emirate capital by motor road. Formally, the DH is responsible for the administration of all village areas within the confines of his District.

634 64 A DH is formally appointed and installed by the Shehu in consultation with his Council and the Colonial officials. Only high ranking men in the state are considered, and in every case but one, all present DH's are the sons of men who held the same rank. In the contemporary scene British ratification means that the choice must be weighted towards a literate English speaker wherever possible. The Shehu must feel that he is obtaining a loyal follower, and must benefit materially from the choice, by gifts in cash and kind from the would-be DH. (This latter action is illegal and unfortunately there is insufficient information for the writer to make a confident descriptive statement about gift giving by would-be office holders). Finally, the Shehu's Council must be won over or at least some of them, so that they will either support the aspirant or split on their opposition to him.

634 The DH's compound is supplied by the N.A. and is the most [644] impressive building in town. Each DH keeps a compound in Maiduguri, in the Shehuri (palace) ward of the city, with a residing Wakil (Chief follower) who appears at the Shehu's Court to represent his superior at the 634 palace. In the District, the DH maintains a large extended household 571 organization of followers and slaves. These live in contiguous and non-

643 The Shehu is also the formal leader of the religious community of the state. This
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796 is embodied in his title "Commander of the Faithful", and is expressed ritually in various ways. Thus at the feast celebrating the end of Ramadan (a yearly fast) it is believed to be a sunna (injunction of the Prophet) that a special ram of the Shehu be killed by the Liman (Chief priest of Bornu). No one considering himself a subject of the Shehu may kill his own ram until the royal ceremony is completed.

644 At all annual festivals and state occasions, and every Friday, to a lesser extent, the Shehu is attended at the palace by representatives of the people. These include the nobility, any DH's who may be in the capital, or their city Wakils, and a representative section of the N.A. departments, a sample of the schoolboy population of the city, and the crafts and trade leaders of the entire city community. A symbolic pledge of loyalty and obedience is made through the saying of prayers for the health and welfare of the monarch and the state. The people, including all the nobles go down on their knees to their monarch, stand when he stands, remove their shoes in his presence, and speak to him only indirectly, using terms of reverence and respect incessantly in their conversation.

643 The question can be posed (but not answered at present) as to the real power and authority of the Shehu in the modern state of
[123] Bornu. The answer would require much more intimacy with the higher coun-
[178] cils of Bornu than was achieved during the field work. However, the writer feels that the monarch is becoming more and more a ritual head as the complexity of the modern state in its internal and external affairs increases. This has been aided and abetted in recent years by the extreme age and blindness of the present Shehu. It was commonly felt among informants around the palace, among DH's, and among many others of